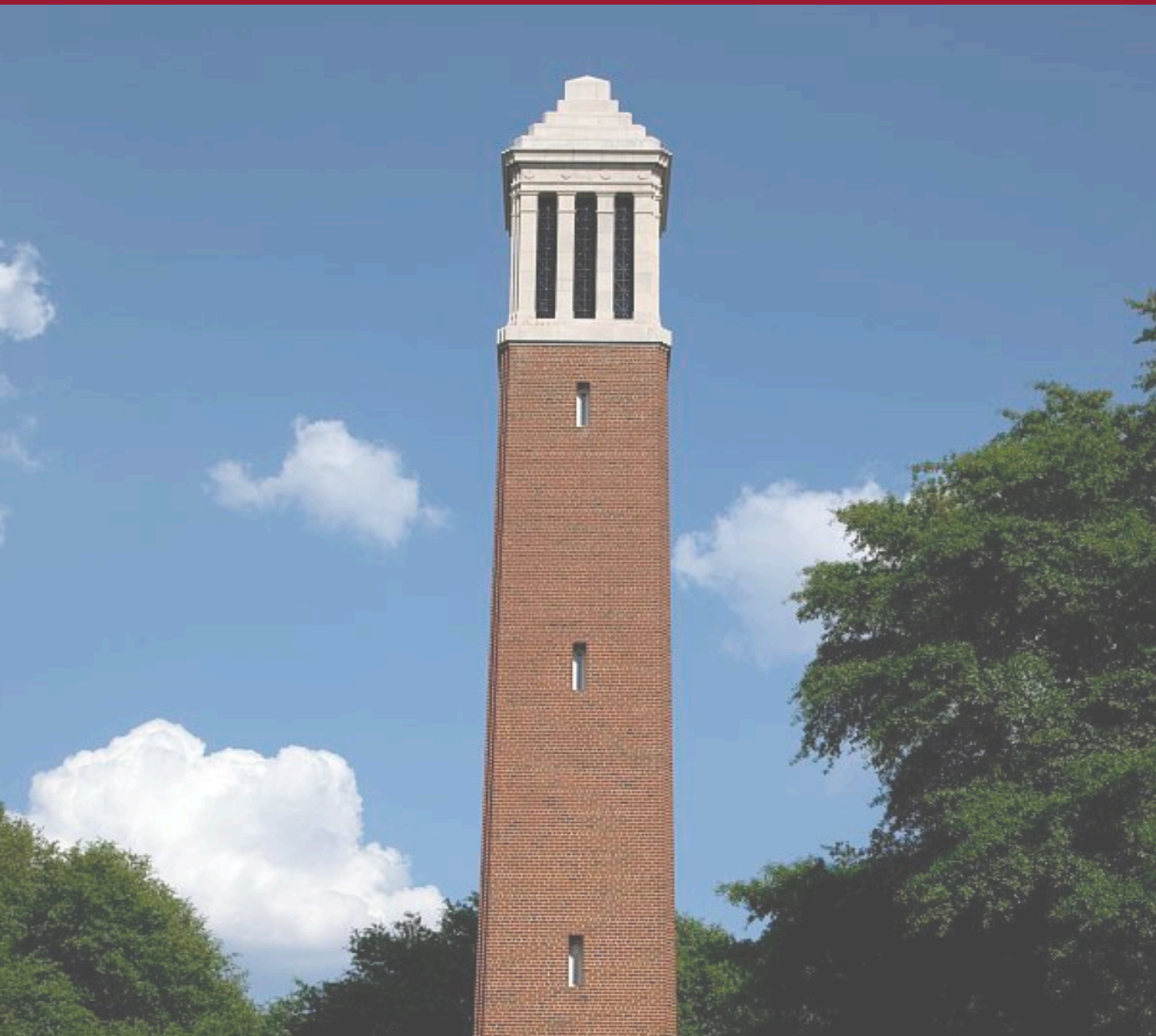


# SIXTEENTH ANNUAL ALABAMA MODEL UNITED NATIONS



**PRESS CORPUS**

**BACKGROUND GUIDE**

# PRESS CORPS: ALMUN XVI

USG-Press: Dyllon Ravenell

AUSG-Press: Mike Escalante



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## Letter from the **DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Esteemed Faculty and Delegates,

Welcome to **ALMUN XVI**! My name is Shrishti Dubey and I am delighted to serve as the Director-General in the sixteenth iteration of the Alabama Model United Nations Conference. I am a senior at the University of Alabama with majors in English and Economics, as well as minors in Mathematical Statistics and Ethics. I am also pursuing my Masters' in Economics at Bama. We have learned from ALMUN XV, our first year back in person, to provide delegates with an enhanced conference. We have prepared a diverse slate of committees, from timely General and Specialized Assemblies, to unpredictable Crisis Committees, to journalistic procedure in Press Corps.

I visited my campus six years ago as a novice delegate in ALMUN X. I had the pleasure of competing in ALMUN XI in my senior year of high school, in our conference's last iteration before COVID. When I joined the University of Alabama campus as a lonely freshman, I sought out the people who had introduced me to the university and found some of my most beloved friendships. Since then, I have served as Undersecretary-General of Press Corps and General Assemblies & Specialized Assemblies to bring that community to future delegates.

In my last year here, I hope to give back and introduce more delegates like my 16-year-old self to the engagement, enjoyment, and enrichment that accompanies MUN. To help you get the most out of your time here, our time has drafted resources like the Delegate Handbook and various Educational Slides, available on our website. If you have any questions about ALMUN, your committee, or MUN, please feel free to reach out to me through the email listed below. Best of luck!

Roll Tide!

Shrishti Dubey

Director-General of ALMUN XVI

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## A Note on Research, Preparation, & Position Papers

Your experience as an ALMUN delegate begins during the time spent leading up to the conference. Proper research and preparation are key to a successful and valuable experience at ALMUN and any MUN conference. For new delegates, this preparation may seem like a daunting task. However, the ALMUN staff is here to help, and these notes should help you structure your lead-up time.

The first place to start your research should be your committee's Background Guide. This is a document prepared by committee staff for their specific committees' delegates. It contains historical contexts, overviews of your topics, and what the staffers will expect from delegates. This document is the perfect jumping off point for all of your research and will also help understand the innerworkings, schematics, and purpose of your character/country assignment as well as your role as a delegate during the conference. These documents can be found on the ALMUN website under your committee.

Position papers are delegates' first interactions with the dais (your committee staffers) and is the final product of a student's preparation and research for any Model United Nations conference. It contains informed perspectives and histories of the state a delegate represents and is crucial to creating an authentic MUN experience. Specific expectations for position papers are listed below.

All delegates are strongly encouraged to submit position papers. Position papers are required for a delegate to be considered for awards. Additionally, there is an award for Best Position Paper within each committee.

## PRESS CORPS POSITION PAPER FORMATTING

- Press Corps position papers should be no longer than two pages, with content divided up by paragraphs.
- The document should be in single spaced, 12 pt, black, Times New Roman font.
- The document should begin with a three line header on the left side as follows:

Name of Delegate  
 Delegate's News Source  
 Delegate's Committee

- Any references should be cited using footnotes in MLA format. When citing electronic sources, include the URL; electronic sources are strongly encouraged for ease of reference.
- **Position papers should be saved as a PDF file and entitled “ALMUN XV\_[Committee]\_[News Source].”**

## CONTENT OF PRESS CORPS POSITION PAPERS

Position papers should include three to five paragraphs, outlined as follows:

1. **The first paragraph** introduces the News Source assigned to the delegate. It should discuss the history, present leanings, distribution, readership, and main coverage areas of the news source. It should also outline its degree of independence from the government of its state. This paragraph ensures research into the news source and prepares delegates to report from its POV.
2. **The second through fourth paragraphs** are on the subject of specific committees. Delegates must discuss 2-3 ALMUN committee topics which are relevant to their news source. Of these 2-3 topics, delegates must choose at least

one GA/SA committee and at least one crisis committee. The delegates may choose to analyze one or both topics for GAs and SAs. Each paragraph will be about one committee topic. These paragraphs will include a brief summary of the committee topic in 1-2 sentences. The bulk of the paragraph will be focused on possible solutions to the issue and comment on which ones the news source would prefer.

3. **The last paragraph** is OPTIONAL. If written, it should serve as a conclusion and summarize the general leanings of the news source, as illustrated throughout the paper.

### *OTHER TIPS & NOTES*

- Do not write in first person! Instead, write as the nation represented (e.g. “The Republic of Burkina Faso leans...”)
- Avoid the passive voice.
- Write matter-of-factly rather than with embellished language.
- Use the example position paper provided in the ALMUN Delegate Handbook for ideas on how the writing and style should look, as well as how to present the information needed to prepare for the conference.

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If you are looking for more information on how a committee runs and debate flows, please check out our [Delegate Handbook](#) and [Educational Powerpoints](#). These documents will break down everything you need to know about awards, parliamentary procedure, and writing.

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Please submit all position papers to [this Google Form](#) no later than February 4th, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. CT.

**DELEGATES THAT DO NOT SUBMIT POSITION PAPERS WILL BE INELIGIBLE FOR AWARDS.**

## Committee Overview

### *Introduction to Press Corps*

Press Corps, on the largest scale, is a committee whose delegates act as reporters by observing and commenting on the actions of other committees at ALMUN. Most of the reporters' time is spent sitting in on and cooperating with other committees, returning to the Press Corps at the end of each committee session to finalize the articles they write about those committees. These articles will include short written reports, visual graphics, and longer Op-eds. The Press Corps, in this way, serves to illustrate the influence of real-world public and governmental opinions on the activities of supranational organizations that make up the UN.

### *Introduction to Types of Work*

Press Corps at ALMUN XVI will diversify the types of work done by delegate-reporters in multiple types of articles and media. (see: Forms of Media)

#### **Reports:**

These are the usual Press-Corps articles, short and mostly matter-of-fact about committee occurrences, with some indications of news source and reporter opinion on those happenings.

#### **Visual Graphics:**

These are graphics articles created through Canva, mostly using pictures, graphs, and hot-button issues and quotes from a committee. These are meant to serve as quick and easy sources of necessary information rather than any deep analysis.

**Op-eds:**

These articles are longer, opinion-based pieces completed by delegates in the second-to last committee session, opining on anything from a specific committee action to the conference as a whole from the point of view of their news source.

**Photography:**

Photos taken by Press Corps staff and delegates will be included in written reports, visual graphics, Op-eds, and the video-summary. Some will also be posted to the ALMUN social media

**Video:**

Video taken by Press Corps staff and delegates may be included in any articles or posted onto ALMUN social media.

## Committee Expectations

Press Corps delegates are expected to be respectful in writing on the work of delegates in other committees. Reporters must be conscious of their representation of occurrences in other committees and report them factually and accurately. All delegates must also keep to the delegate handbook and maintain a respectful, productive, and fun environment, especially in light of the serious issues that may be discussed.

In terms of expectations specific to Press Corps, delegates ought to be up-to-date on the Background Guide for Press Corps and also the other committees in the conference which they may be observing. Please make sure to research the news source which you are assigned and their most prominent issues. Delegates must illustrate their research of both these subjects in their Position Paper. Delegates will also be expected to speak convincingly in campaigning for their committees and summarizing the events they have witnessed.

Delegates must also come prepared to write on a variety of issues in a variety of ways, though they will have assistance from the dais and staff of Press Corps.

## Press Corps History

ALMUN Press Corps is modeled after the United Nations Correspondents Association:

“The United Nations Correspondents Association (UNCA) was founded in 1948 at Lake Success on Long Island where the United Nations was temporarily located.

At the time, the United Nations had 56 member nations. UNCA started with fifty members, mostly representatives of American and Canadian media. The first president of UNCA was an American John G. Rogers, correspondent for the New York Tribune.

The relationship between the United Nations Correspondents Association, as the organization representing the United Nations press corps, and the Secretary-General is based on an agreement dated September 16th, 1995 and embodied in the UNCA constitution.

As the role and the influence of the United Nations grew in the world, the number of correspondents also grew.

From its inception, UNCA worked to bring correspondents, members of diplomatic delegations and the Department of Public Information together by organizing press conferences, social functions, luncheons and an annual awards event.

Among the eminent guest of UNCA were King Hussein of Jordan, Prime Minister Fidel Castro of Cuba, Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev of the USSR, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India, Polish leader Edward Gierek, French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann, the presidents of General Assemblies and the Secretaries-General.

After the death of Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold in a plane crash in Ndola, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) on 17 September 1961, UNCA established the Dag

Hammarskjold Memorial Scholarship Fund, which annually awards several young journalists from developing countries a stipend to visit the United Nations to cover the General Assembly.

In 1992, the UNCA Executive Committee established the global media awards for excellence in UN coverage to journalists from around the world including Africa, Asia, the Arab world, and Latin America. The annual UNCA Awards is held annually in December in New York.

The United Nations Correspondents Association is incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) in the State of New York.

The United Nations Correspondents Association is recognized annually in a resolution adopted by the General Assembly under the mandate of the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities, known as The Committee on Information. In its 2013 resolution, the General Assembly commended the United Nations Correspondents Association for its ongoing activities.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “History of the United Nations Correspondents Association.”

## Forms of Media

### *Reports*

Three reports will be required: one at the end of each of the sessions 2 through 4. One must be a written article and one must be a visual graphic. The format of the remaining report is up to the delegate. The article should be between 250 and 350 words. Articles entail concise, focused, fact-based reporting on the occurrences of the committee a delegate has observed. The delegate should feel free to include outside references in an article, though that will require a Works Cited with links to any reference materials. This article may show the leanings of the assigned news agency, though it should focus on reporting the facts of the committee. Visual graphics will be made on Canva, may use words in the form of quotes or major issues, but should mostly include graphics. The content of this should outline the major blocs in a committee, their positions, and/or the events of the session. These are more an outline of the committee than a reporting of it, as compared to written articles.

### *Op-eds*

An op-ed is a written prose piece expressing an opinion. An op-ed is an opportunity to showcase the opinions and biases of a news source and will make up a large part of the Best News Source award. Delegates will have the option of writing about one of the committees or topics they have observed, or an overarching, general theme of the conference. There are some committees which may require an Op-ed on their subjects (see: Observed Committees). The Op-ed should be worked on throughout the course of the conference but must be complete by the end of the fifth session. Op-eds

should be between 600 and 750 words. These Op-eds will be presented to any relevant committee they reference and will illustrate the impact of public and media opinion on the operations of supranational organization.

### *Photography*

All Press Corps personnel are encouraged to take pictures, using phones or cameras, to accompany their articles. These pictures should be submitted to your chair as soon as possible in order for them to get approval that they can be placed in the paper. These photographs may also be used in closing ceremonies for ALMUN XVI.

### *Video*

In addition to photography, ALMUN's Press Corps is in charge of providing a video for closing ceremonies on Sunday. Press Corps personnel are to use their smartphones or cameras to capture this footage, which will need to be shown to and approved by chairs before it is used.



## Example Media

*Article with Works Cited:*

# Members of the Akutami Tribe Killed In Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil



Yesterday in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, four members of the previously uncontacted Akutami tribe were killed by a nearby rancher's gunmen. After walking next to the edge of the reserve land, a hired gunmen shot and killed four members, while three were left severely injured. The injured members were rushed to the hospital where they were treated and are now stable, but in critical condition. Authorities in Brazil are responding to the scene and

questioning the people responsible for this incident. An investigation is being conducted by the indigenous affairs bureau, to which they offered the statement that, "Due to the outcoming reports, we have a lot of evidence to confirm through the investigation. Since the Akutami tribe was previously isolated and the reserve land covers a large area, we have little information on the encounter that took place between the Akutami and the rancher." The rancher's attorney has claimed that, "He was merely defending his property from intruders."

Due to the slash in reserve lands under Brazil's president, Michel Temer, it's very hard to distinguish the borders between private property and land belonging to indigenous tribes. Recently, more and more ranchers have hired gunmen to protect their property from members of the Akutami tribe among other tribes. Indigenous rights activists, such as Survival International have spoken out, saying that, "The rising rates of incidents occurring along the border of reserve land is disgraceful and needs more attention from the government." Another indigenous rights group, IWGIA, or the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, has put out a statement saying that isolated indigenous people need more protection from massacres like these. Julie Koch, the executive director of IWGIA, has said that, "these killings could wipe out large percentages of uncontacted tribes that are already affected by deforestation, disease, and eviction." Land disputes are becoming more common, leaving indigenous tribes the most defenseless and vulnerable than they've ever been. "The survival of these smaller

tribes relies on whether or not the government provides protection for them,” concluded Survival International.

#### Works Cited

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Example Visual Graphic:



An infographic describing the impact of positive news stories in India in 2014<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Parekh (2014).

*Example Op-ed.*

For an example Op-ed, please refer to Herbert Lin's piece titled “Op-ed: What a house cat can teach us about cybersecurity” in the LA Times, as cited in the bibliography. The article is copied below for your reference:

“The news today often contains reports about cybersecurity breaches that steal our data or threaten our national security. The nation spends billions of dollars on cybersecurity measures, and yet we seem unable to get ahead of this problem. Why are our computers so hard to protect?

Recent experience with a house cat provided insights into the nature of this problem. I am allergic to cats. My daughter came home, cat in hand, for an extended stay, and I had to find a way of confining Pounce to a limited area. However, as many cat parents would have known — though I did not — this was doomed to be a losing battle.

Everything that I tried to confine Pounce worked for a little while but eventually failed as he found a way past my newest security barrier — just as hackers eventually find their way through the cybersecurity barriers erected to stop them.

I have the advantage of unlimited material resources compared to those available to the cat — I am presumably smarter than a cat, I have greater manual dexterity, and I’m a higher mammal who knows how to use tools. So why did I lose this battle so decisively?

Here are some of the cybersecurity lessons that became clear from my ordeal.

- To succeed against a determined attacker (Pounce was very determined), I have to be willing to go all in sooner rather than later. Even then, my victory may not be entirely decisive. But what certainly won’t work is to deploy security measures that will minimally do the job because I am too lazy to do the full monty at the beginning.
- Pounce has the advantage of unlimited time, and he tries until he succeeds. It may take a few days, but eventually he does. Moreover, Pounce only needs to

succeed once to get out. Every one of my confinement measures needs to work to keep him confined.

- Greater material resources and more intelligence do not necessarily overcome the huge advantage of Pounce’s ability to make an unlimited number of attempts to circumvent my barriers. If he fails on any given attempt, he incurs no penalty (my daughter would be quite distressed if it did).
- Pounce has a powerful protector (my daughter) whose wrath I am unwilling to confront for diplomatic reasons. Hackers operating out of foreign states often have the backing of those governments, even if they are nominally operating as free agents, and we may not have adequate leverage to persuade their protectors to take action.
- My defensive measures succeeded completely until they didn’t. That is, it looked like I was winning the battle to confine Pounce right up until the moment I saw Pounce outside the confinement area. And this happened repeatedly. So, I was often lulled into a false sense of security.
- Being able to take Pounce’s perspective would have helped me immensely in crafting appropriate defenses. But viewing the world from eyes at a 6-inch height from the floor would have been very difficult for me, and so I didn’t do it. He thus saw ways of circumventing or destroying my defensive measures that I did not see.
- Manipulating people can be more powerful than any technical defenses — what in the cybersecurity world is called social engineering. When Pounce mews plaintively and looks into my daughter’s eyes, my daughter just opens the door to the confinement area and he walks out. My daughter may have agreed to help me keep Pounce confined, but he was often successful in turning her loyalties. In cybersecurity lingo, my daughter was a “trusted insider” that went rogue.

In the end, I “won” the battle when my daughter moved out, taking Pounce with her. There, too, is an important cybersecurity lesson: Without a computer to be compromised, cyberattacks are not feasible, so don’t use computers when they are not

necessary. My toothbrush and refrigerator work just fine without high-tech communications capabilities, thank you, and I would really prefer not to incur any more cybersecurity risks.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Lin (2021).

## Rules and Procedures

### *General Rules*

While in the committee room in the first committee session, delegates will participate in a Budget Meeting. This means they will, in a round robin fashion designated by the chair, propose 2-3 committees they would prefer to observe and provide reasons why the topics of those committees are relevant to their news source and its host country. They will then be assigned a committee and be released to observe those committees either in the first or second committee session, at the USG's discretion.

At the beginning of each committee session, delegates will meet in the press corps room for attendance before being dismissed to the committees they are observing. While in their committees, press members must listen to the direction of the dias and make sure to leave the committee room before voting procedures commence. Delegates must return to the press corps room at least 20 minutes before the end of the session to edit their articles and submit them to the dais for publishing.

### *Electronics*

While delegates are observing committees, they will be among the few in-committee allowed the use of electronics, including phones, laptops, and cameras. Reporters may take notes on paper or on their laptops. Reporters may also write their articles while they are in the committee.

No electronics are allowed while debate and summaries are occurring in the Press Corps room.

Delegates must use a shared Google Drive for notes, reports, visual graphics, op-eds, press releases, photos, and other work done by the reporter.

ALMUN will provide laptops to delegates that will have the capability to write articles, access to Google Drive, access to Canva, and access to video editing software used to construct the final video summary.

Delegates are allowed and encouraged to bring their own cameras if they wish, and are encouraged to use their phone cameras for photo and video during the conference.

### *Committee Assignments*

Committee Assignments are determined by a variety of factors, chief among them the delegates' position paper and their efforts in campaigning for committees in the first committee session. Committees will NOT be pre-assigned. The campaigning for topics and the position paper will be compared for depth of research and committee assignments.



## Preparation

### *Research*

Delegates will need to perform prior research on their assigned news agency to determine the political leanings and other belief systems (including that of their audience). We recommend you find articles written by and about the agency to have a more complete understanding.

Delegates will need to know this Background Guide and all its requirements for articles, pictures, and video in depth in order to be prepared for the conference

Delegates should also read the background guides on the other committees they find interest in for the purpose of campaigning for the committee(s) they wish to cover, which will occur during our first committee session. In reviewing the other background guides, delegates should consider different news agencies' positions on the topic and how they might cover what is happening.

### *Position Paper*

Delegates will need to refer to the document outlining Position Paper Guidelines and look at the requirements for Press Corps. The position paper requires delegates to demonstrate research and knowledge into press corps as a whole, their news agency, and the committees which they feel are most relevant to their point of view.

### *Campaigning for Committees*

During the first committee session, delegates will campaign for which committee they would like to cover. Please prepare what committee(s) you would like to cover and make sure to voice the reasons why you would like to do so.

### *Supplies*

There are a few supplies that are vital to a good reporter (and delegate!). We will supply laptops for all delegates for conference use through the University. We will also provide writing pads for each delegate. Please bring with you writing utensils and any supplemental materials (such as: background guides, research materials, etc.). We also encourage you to bring your cellphone and/or any cameras for taking pictures to accompany your written media.

## Awards

There will be three awards given for Press Corps. The awards will be based on the threshold below, according to performance throughout all committee sessions and the quality of works produced.

In addition, the elements of newsworthiness will play a part in the grading scale for awards. The elements of newsworthiness are:

1. Timeliness – a time related reason to publish now
2. Proximity – relevance to the audience
3. Conflict – disagreement or contention between people, group, or institutions
4. Prominence – involves well-known or noteworthy individuals or entities
5. Impact – the effect on people's lives
6. Human interest – something out of the ordinary

### *Best Reporter:*

The Best Reporter award will be granted to a delegate with a high-level skill of writing, including following the basis of newsworthiness. The awarded delegate must also be able to synthesize logical arguments in Op-Ed pieces, as well as writing clear press releases.

*Best News Source:*

The Best News Source award will be granted to a delegate that maintained the attitude and bias of their assigned news organization. This includes writing appropriate Op-Ed pieces.

*Best Position Paper:*

The Best Position Paper award will be granted to a delegate with a high-level skill of writing, research, and analytic skills. The awarded delegate will also show a high level of knowledge for their news source and background guides.

## News Agencies

When discussing the different news agencies around the world, it is important to consider the laws in place in those countries that result in the amount of freedom of the press as well as the political bias of the agency. Below, I have included those two pieces of information as well as anything I found that should be highly considered when you are writing your articles. Once you have received your assignment, I expect that you also do research on your agency to learn more about the laws of the country regarding press and what these political biases mean.

The New York Times: US  
Free press  
Political bias: liberal

Le Monde: France  
Free Press  
Political bias: liberal

Daily Mail: UK  
Free Press  
Political bias: conservative

Pravda: Russia  
Not Free Press  
Political bias: leftist

People's Daily: China  
Not Free Press  
Communist Party affiliation

Die Welt: Germany  
Free Press  
Political Bias: conservative

El Pais: Spain  
Free Press  
Political Bias: liberal

Times of India: India  
Partly Free Press  
Political Bias: conservative

Corriere della Sera: Italy  
Partly Free Press  
Political Bias: centrist,  
liberalism

Aftonbladet: Sweden  
Free Press  
Political Bias: left-wing  
Keep in mind: Aftonbladet is  
categorized as a tabloid!

The Sunday Times: South  
Africa  
Partly Free Press  
Political Bias: conservative

Dawn: Pakistan  
Not Free Press  
Political Bias: Centrist

Financial Tribune: Iran  
Not Free Press  
Political Bias: center right

Herald Sun: Australia  
Free Press  
Political Bias: conservative  
Keep in mind: Herald Sun is  
categorized as a tabloid!

Korea Times: South Korea  
Partly Free Press  
Political Bias: independent

Japan Times: Japan  
Free Press  
Political Bias: independent  
centrist

El Sol de Mexico: Mexico  
Not Free Press  
Political Bias: conservative

Calgary Herald: Canada  
Free Press  
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Al-Raya: Qatar  
Not Free Press  
Pro-government stance

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